Sexual Assault Kit Initiative Inventorying and Testing Fact Sheet

- → Federal government has estimated hundreds of thousands of untested, un-submitted sexual assault kits (SAKs)
- → Speculation why this backlog exists -
 - 1. Spanning from lack of funding to case prioritization
 - 2. Previously instructed to retain because of no known suspects
- → Moving forward funding is focused on testing and prevention



Why is this important?

With the National DNA CODIS database other states are finding DNA matches and identifying serial rapists.

• This not a punitive action and we are requesting no sexual assault kits be destroyed.

WHO? The West Virginia Sexual Assault Kit Initiative (WVSAKI) is a collaborative project of the WV Division of Justice and Community Services, the WV Foundation for Rape Information and Services, the WV State Police Forensic Lab, the WV Prosecuting Attorneys Institute, and Marshall University Forensic Science Center.

WHAT? WVSAKI is part of a national initiative to create a coordinated community response to ensure a just and victim-centered response to sexual assault cases that includes the processing and testing of all sexual assault/rape kits – both submitted and previously unsubmitted. Jurisdications in this project are now finding resolutions in some of these cases through matches in CODIS (the national DNA data bank). Training and additional funds are available to assist jurisdictions in the investigation of these cold cases.

WHERE? Initially the project will focus on the following counties: Berkeley, Brooke, Fayette, Greenbrier, Harrison, Jefferson, Kanawha, Marion, Mason, Mercer, Ohio, Raleigh, Randolph, Upshur and Wood counties.

WHEN? Inventorying in each of the above counties should be happening now! Questions??? Contact Misty Marra at (304) 691-8952 or by e-mail at marra2@marshall.edu or contact Sarah Brown at (304) 558-8814, etension 53337.

Inventorying:

Step 1 - DJCS mailed memo to each prosecutor & law enforcement agency in the identified 15 counties to explain the grant, that DJCS & Marshall University Forensic Science Center would begin working with them to inventory their sexual assault kits & to establish a Point of Contact for this purpose

Step 2 – Marshall
University Forensic
Science Center sent an email out to all the Points
of Contact with a link for
a webinar on
inventorying, the
information needed for
this inventory and the
spreadsheet which needs
filled out to complete
the inventory to the 15
counties listed above.

Step 3 – Identify an individual who is responsible for inventorying of SAK's.

→ Complete the inventory spreadsheet → E-mail inventory spreadsheet to Misty Marra @ marra2@marshall.edu

Note: During inventory, if it is noted that the victim had consensual sex prior to assault, then the investigating officer will need to attempt to collect a reference sample from that individual prior to completion of testing or communicate with the WVSPFL why it cannot be obtained.

Note: If an agency does not have any sexual assault kits that fit the criteria; then the law enforcement agency must certify this in writing on their agency letterhead and must be signed by the Sheriff, Detachment Commander, or the Chief of Police.

Prosecutor's Role	Help to communicate with Law Enforcement agencies - not a punitive action and the importance of inventorying and testing kits and if DNA is found to input in CODIS
Law Enforcement's Role	Inventorying kits and submitting spreadsheet to MUFSC
Advocate's Role	Help to communicate with Prosecutor's & Law Enforcement agencies - not a punitive action and the importance of
	inventorying and testing kits and if DNA is found to input in CODIS – and if needed communicate with victim.

Testing:

Step 1: Marshall
University Forensic
Science Center
(MUFSC) and WV
State Police
Forensic Lab
(WVSPFL) will
determine a
schedule/timeframe
for each county to
send sexual assault

kits to MUFSC.

Step 2:

- MUFSC will test kits and issue a DNA report to the investigating agency
- WVSPFL will
 review the data
 and if there is an
 eligible DNA
 profile, enter it
 into CODIS.

Step 3: If a match occurs within CODIS and generates an investigative lead, a letter will be sent to the investigating agency detailing the circumstances and the procedures necessary to confirm the match.

Prosecutor's Role	If there is a match- prosecuting a case
Law Enforcement's Role	Investigating and confirming DNA matches
Advocate's Role	Victim notification and support